**Transportation
Synthesis Report**

Research and Communication Services
Wisconsin Department of Transportation
608-261-8198
wisdotresearch@dot.state.wi.us

Software and Systems for Tracking Correspondence:
Practices Among State DOTs

Prepared for
Bureau of Highway Operations
Division of Transportation System Development

Prepared by
CTC & Associates LLC
WisDOT Research and Communication Services Section
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Transportation Synthesis Reports (TSRs) are brief summaries of currently available information on topics of interest to WisDOT technical staff. Online and print sources include NCHRP and other TRB programs, AASHTO, the research and practices of other state DOTs, and related academic and industry research. Internet hyperlinks in TSRs are active at the time of publication, but changes on the host server can make them obsolete.

Request for Report

To improve its communications efficiencies, the Bureau of Highway Operations is interested in establishing a simple "customer relations" database or management system to archive correspondence with the public on specific topics. The database would provide for easy filtering/searching of responses to questions that have already been answered in order to reduce duplication of effort on identical or similar inquiries. The bureau requested a scan of other state DOTs to learn whether this kind of system is being utilized.

Summary

We distributed a brief survey to members of the AASHTO Research Advisory Committee asking whether members use software for these purposes, or were aware of software that could be used. If "yes," members were asked whether the software is off-the-shelf or was developed in-house, and to provide contact information for a person in the agency who could discuss the product. Seven state DOTs responded to the survey, four with correspondence database systems in place. Responses and contact information are listed below.

Montana

Respondent: Waverly Engebretson, Information Specialist, phone: 406-444-7215, email: wengebretson@mt.gov.
Our Oracle system was built in-house and Brett McAlister in ISD administers the program. We log our correspondence into this system and it tracks the letter until it's complete. We then have a database to refer to.

Oregon

Respondent: Rebecca Thoreson, ODOT Citizens' Representative, phone: 503-986-4366, email: Rebecca.L.Thoreson@state.or.us.
Ask ODOT (http://highway.odot.state.or.us/cf/comments/comments.cfm) has a customer tracking database. It was built by ITS using Remedy and Crystal Reports. We worked with Leon Orlov to create the program but Craig Stinnette is now our main point of contact if we have problems (which are rare) or want to add new reports. WisDOT is welcome to contact me directly about the tracking system, report capabilities and utilities.

Tennessee

Respondent: Michelle Griggs, Customer Service Coordinator- Community Relations Division, phone: 615-741-8261, email: michelle.griggs@state.tn.us.
We launched our Correspondence Tracking System (CTS) in January of 2006, which is a database to be used by all TDOT divisions, regions and offices. It is a bit more involved than typical correspondence databases. Mark Herring

of our Information Technology Division actually created the database and will be glad to answer any technical questions. He can be reached at 615-253-6409.

Washington

Respondent: Kimberly Colburn, Customer Service- WSDOT Communications, phone: 360-705-7438, email: colburk@wsdot.wa.gov.

We use a FileMaker Pro database software, which is available off-the-shelf, to manage constituent correspondence. The application for the database has been created in-house by our Information Technology Staff to specifically fit our needs. For technical questions about our Correspondence Database, please contact George Saunders, WSDOT IT Staff, at 360-705-7110 or saundeg@wsdot.wa.gov. For questions about how we use the database to manage our constituent correspondence, you can contact me directly.